

## THE VIRGINIA TEACHER

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## EDUCATIONAL COMMENT

### FUNDAMENTALS

Teach reading, writing, and arithmetic, of course, but not as fundamentals, except as in the learning one is taught to read fine things, to write beautiful thoughts, and to know that in the fundamentals of life the sum of one's happiness can not be obtained by subtracting from others, and that the way to multiply the value of one's possessions is to divide them with others, especially with those in need. Teach geography, but only that to world knowledge may be added world sympathy and understanding and fellowship. Teach history that against its gray background of suffering and sorrow and struggle we may better understand the present and may project a fine future. Teach civics to make strong the ideals of liberty and justice, and to make free, through obedience, the citizens of a republic. Teach science, but always as the handmate of religion, to reveal how the brooding spirit of God created the world and all that is therein, and see the stars in their courses, in accordance with the eternal laws that He Himself had ordained. Teach music

and art and literature. Reveal beauty and truth. Inculcate social and civic ideals.

Teach that which gives intelligence and skill, but forget not soul culture, for out of this comes the more abundant life bringing forth the fruits of the spirit. These are the real fundamentals in education, for character is higher than intellect and the soul shall never die.—Randall J. Condon, president of the Department of Superintendence, National Education Association.

## VIRGINIA LIBRARY DEVELOPMENTS

Interest in libraries in Virginia has greatly increased in the past year, as is shown by the unusual numbers of requests that have come to the Extension Department of the Virginia State Library relative to the establishment of libraries of various kinds throughout the State. Matthews, Nansemond, and Augusta counties are all engaged in campaigns to establish libraries. Elizabeth City County has established the first county library in the state at Hampton. Mrs. Matthew C. Armstrong gave the building, equipment, and \$500 annually for the purchase of books, as a memorial to her father, Mr. Charles H. Taylor. The library is called the Charles H. Taylor Memorial Library. The county board of supervisors, the county school board, and the city council pledged \$3,600 annually for its support. At Suffolk, the Woman's Club dedicated, on Armistice Day, a memorial library to the soldiers of Nansemond County. This library has only the financial support of the club, but they are interested in a campaign to make it a county library with a regular income from the city and the county for its maintenance.

The public libraries at Richmond, Lynchburg, and Norfolk have added greatly to their usefulness by the establishment of branch libraries in the sections farthest removed from the main library and in the service to the public schools. Roanoke is



also expecting to have a new and much needed main library building to take care of its rapidly growing work—circulation reached over 150,000 for 1926 for a population of about 55,000.

The Extension Department has sent out to counties 10,000 volumes in traveling libraries of fifty books each, transportation being furnished gratis by the steam roads of the state. They are usually kept in circulation for six months before being returned to the library, and the circulation often is as high as 375 for a collection. As Virginia is largely rural, this work is of great importance and is steadily growing.

—*The Library Journal*.

#### COMMENCEMENT TIME

Education has been in the past, and will continue to be in the future, the sunlight of civilization, diffusing light and warmth to millions who are groping for it—the soul of progress, the heart of life, the need of humanity.” Thus spake Evelyn Brenner, valedictorian of a graduating class at Newport News, Virginia, in February, in a talk that was unusually rich in significant truths. This search for values is a feature of the commencement season that cannot be too much magnified.

The quest for values is really the heart of all education, merely coming to a natural climax as pupils face graduation. To this end the orientation courses that have been developing in the colleges should be brought down into the high schools. No education is really liberal that does not develop appreciation of the scientific method and some understanding of the contribution it has made to human progress. No education is really liberal that does not show how the great achievements of the learned world are applied in the realities of life day by day. A student is not oriented until he has discovered his own talent and knows how to approach the accumulated knowledge bearing on that talent.

A superintendent of a large system of schools always talks at commencement time on the values involved in the seven cardinal objectives of education. He says they are an unusually fine plan for a well-balanced life and that it will take twenty years of persistent effort to make America appreciate their importance to education. Let us then make sure that the graduates of our schools appreciate sound health; worthy home membership; the tools, technics, and spirit of learning; faithful citizenship; vocational efficiency; wise use of leisure; and ethical character.—*Journal of the National Education Association*.

#### LIBRARY COURSES IN TEACHER-TRAINING INSTITUTIONS

Library science courses in the teachers college and normal school are the result of an urgent demand plus the school man's expressed conviction. The library courses offered in such schools run all the way from a series of a dozen lessons to the well balanced curriculum closely approximating the Minimum Standards in School library work adopted by the Council of the American Library Association.

Much of the work done, however, is open to criticism. This may be because the courses are too few or too superficial; because there is over-emphasis on technical subjects; or because of the disposition to insert library science in the curriculum without providing teachers.

Too many teacher-training institutions are attempting to prepare teachers for school librarianship in one course of perhaps two hours per week. It is true that the teachers college curriculum is overcrowded and that the catalog states that “the library methods course is designed to prepare for the position of teacher-librarian only.” The absurdity lies in all-inclusiveness and in wrong emphasis in the subject matter. Another serious handicap has been inadequate staff. There is a tendency



to super-impose teaching upon an already fully occupied librarian. "I am very much interested," writes one such librarian, "in the problem of library instruction, especially in the need for it in teachers colleges, but I have been unable to do much with it on account of the fact that I have no trained assistants, and find it impossible to add teaching to my already full schedule of work."

The remedies are obvious where a state law does not intervene: eliminate the highly technical subjects such as cataloging and classification, and concentrate on what the part-time librarian in the small school really needs—knowledge of children's literature and book selection and a few simple administrative details. Where state law specifies the teaching of technical processes, or wherever the demand for school librarians suggests the necessity for intensive library science curricula in teacher-training agencies, several procedures are indicated: (1) making library science a full-fledged department of the school with an adequate staff and a curriculum approximating the best available standards; (2) concentration of library science courses in one or two of the several teacher-training agencies of the state, development of a full curriculum, employment of an adequate staff, and steering of prospective school librarians to that agency; (3) offering the full library science curriculum through the summer session, so arranging the program that students may complete the curriculum in a series of years.—*Annual Report of American Library Association*.

That 93 per cent of the members of county boards of education in North Carolina are natives of the State is indicated by a study of the development and present status of the county board of education, made by Rawleigh Lewis Tremain, of the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill. The median age of the members is approx-

imately 50 years, and their education ranges from one with no formal schooling to 31 who are college graduates; practically all are members of the church. More are connected with farming or merchandising than with any other occupation. The median value of property held by them is \$15,735, and the median annual income is \$2,781. Slightly more than half have held previously some other public position, and 26 are engaged in other public service. The median number of years served on the board of education by these members is between three and four years.

## BOOKS

### LIVE STORIES ABOUT DEAD ONES

CLASSICAL MYTHS THAT LIVE TODAY. By Frances E. Sabin. New York: Silver, Burdett and Company. 1927. Pp. 348. \$1.92.

More and more it is being felt that mythology should be taught in every high school because classical literature seems to be holding a place in the curricula of colleges of all ranks. In tracing the classical element through English literature one finds numberless allusions to the mythology of the ancients, and for the understanding of many English classics *Classical Myths That Live Today* will be of great assistance. The last part of the title "That Live Today" brings out one special feature of the book, that of connecting the work of a textbook with real life. It is different from any other book on mythology.

The stories are told simply and concisely so that a young student can understand them. In case the book is used as a text there are questions to aid in study. For maturer students there are references for additional reading and further study of literary allusions. Many of our words and expressions which are dependent upon the knowledge of classical mythology are explained through the stories and are also given in summary in the appendix. The book contains a list of projects which may be worked out by individuals or in class